



**Chris Owens**  
Director

**May has been a busy month** for women's health. OFW held two women's health fairs during National Women's Health Week and participated in the annual MS Expo.

June 9th the Hispanic/Latino Coalition will hold its [annual health fair](#) at the Americana Community Center. See the [calendar](#) for more details.

**Two versions of VAWA** have been proposed to re-authorize the Act and are being watched both with interest and trepidation.

If Congress does not act, all protections and funding under VAWA will expire later this year. If the Senate version is adopted, protections would be expanded to fill existing gaps for underserved populations. The House version would eliminate, not only new but some well established existing VAWA protections and [services](#).

At a time when resources are scarce, local communities including Louisville, rely on VAWA to provide legal protections and to fund services.

## Beaded Treasures Project

I recently had the pleasure of meeting Surekha Kulkarni, the driving force behind the [Beaded Treasures Project](#). Surekha came to the U.S. from India and as a woman of many abilities has chosen to put her artistic talent and business savvy to work for a good cause: Creating a bridge to entrepreneurship.

After Surekha discovered the Kentucky Refugee Ministries women who bead she devised a plan for refugee women to develop entrepreneurial skills. Surekha guides the women as they develop their talents, products and marketing ideas. They learn to build business plans and to make their beading profitable. Then they begin repaying the micro-loans that provided the materials for their beading.

She purchases high quality materials at wholesale bulk prices to keep costs low for the artists. Donations from

area artists and other supporters help finance the project. The only reward Surekha receives for her investment, effort and advice is sharing her love of beading and seeing the women hone their entrepreneurial skills.

Find out more about the Beaded Treasures Project online in a recent [LEO](#) article, an [announcement](#) by the Indian Professional Council, and of course, on the [Beaded Treasures website](#). You can contribute to the project by purchasing the jewelry, hosting an event, or making a donation. Contact the Beaded Treasures Project [here](#).



## Why All The Fuss About VAWA?

As we look forward to a holiday weekend most of us are not focused on what is happening in Congress. But even if we are not paying attention, a lot is at stake.

The version of VAWA reauthorization passed by the Senate (S. 1925) is the more comprehensive bill for serving victims. The later version passed by the House excludes the LGBTQ community from protection, reduces or eliminates protections for immigrant women—and would also allow some immigrant victims who assist in prosecution of perpetrators to be punished. It fails to address the crisis of violence against American Indian women by not recognizing tribal court authority to hold perpetrators accountable. Some advocates describe this version as protection for abusers.

### What is VAWA?

VAWA is the Violence Against Women's Act. Since 1994 this legislation has provided legal protections for victims of crimes, particularly abuse and funding for programs & services. VAWA must be re-authorized every 5 years to remain in effect.

[The current authorization from 2005 expired in 2011](#). Funding is scheduled to end later this year.

### Why is it Important to Immigrant Women?

Example 1: VAWA has allowed immigrant victims of domestic violence and to obtain immigration relief independent of their abusive spouse or parent (called "self-petitioning") and provided for specific types of visas in qualifying cases ("U-visas" for up to 4 years). Some protections were later added to include elderly victims.

Example 2: VAWA has allowed immigrant victims of sex trafficking to obtain "T-visas" with permission to work and the same access to benefits as refugees.

### Why is VAWA Important to Tribal Women?

Gaps in state, federal, local and tribal jurisdictions allow non-Indian perpetrators to go unprosecuted. The Senate's version for reauthorization of VAWA proposed changes which would help close those gaps. The Indian Law Resource Center [explains the need for change](#).

- Community violence prevention
- Protections for victims who are evicted from their homes because of domestic violence or stalking
- Funding for services like rape crisis centers and hotlines
- Legal assistance
- Programs for immigrant women and other under-served populations

[Click to see](#) letter by Marta Miranda, President/CEO of the Center for Women and Families on the House proposal to reduce VAWA protections. The Center is the primary provider of services to victims of abuse in our community including advocacy, shelter and the 24/7 abuse hotline.



## OTHER OFW LINKS OF INTEREST TO WOMEN



[Build Economic Security](#)

[Women Owned Business Directory](#)

[Resources for Entrepreneurs](#)



[OFW Louisville on Facebook](#)

[Events, News & Workshops](#)

**Voter Information:**  
[Can I Vote?](#)  
[Where Do I Vote?](#)

[Women's Organizations](#)

## OFW HEALTH FAIR Photos with Norton's Mobile

The OFW Health Fairs had everything from Louisville Free Public Library to Preston Chiropractic to Infinite Bliss Yoga



There were plenty of things to see and do - including screenings provided by Norton's Mobile Unit

## OFW COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Sunday, April 01, 2012 - Saturday, June 30, 2012 [Foster Parents Needed](#)

### MAY

Thursday, May 31, 2012 - Sunday, June 10, 2012 [Looking for Lilith Presents: Looking Forward, Looking Back](#)

Thursday, May 31, 2012 - Saturday, June 02, 2012 [College Women's Leadership Conference](#)

### JUNE

Saturday, June 02, 2012 [Americana World Festival](#)

Saturday, June 02, 2012 [BeadedTreasures @ Worldfest](#)

Wednesday, June 06, 2012 - Thursday, June 07, 2012 [Own Your Own Business Seminar](#)

Thursday, June 07, 2012 [Tax Restructuring: Who Pays What?](#)

Friday, June 08, 2012 - Sunday, June 24, 2012 [Buried Child @ Bunbury Theatre](#)

Saturday, June 09, 2012 [My Community, My Health](#)

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